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Policy - Port Augusta for 'Transcontinental'

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PRESS RELEASE FOR THE "TRANSCONTINENTAL" PORT AUGUSTA.

BY THE HON. THE PREMIER, MR. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P. 12.2.68.

The people of Port Augusta will benefit markedly from the policies which the Government has initiated and which specifically refer to this area.

Upon recommendations of the Public Works Standing Committee, a 108 bed \$12½M. public hospital will be built at Port Augusta. The Government has already in South Australia undertaken vastly increased expenditure for Health and Hospitals, and in addition to the Port Augusta Hospital, these health services will benefit every part of the State. At the time the Government took office, South Australia spent less per head of population on Health and Hospitals than any other part of Australia and had done so consistently since the war. This meant that there was a poor provision of hospitals, of trained medical staff and trained nursing staff in proportion to population than in any other part of the continent. In three years, the Labor Government has taken South Australia's expenditure on Health and Hospitals from the lowest in Australia to the highest from Government money in taxation and loan monies and to more than 50c. per head of population per year above the Australian average. The new specialist and pathological services and equipment provided, the additions to training facilities already provided or in the course of construction, will mean a marked improvement in Health and Hospital services in South Australia.

The Government has also been concerned to assist employment and expansion in Port Augusta. It has lent full support and assistance to the development of the Mount Gunson copper mine and is ready to provide the necessary housing for operatives in Port Augusta.

On the approach of the Commonwealth Railways that additional employment could be provided at Port Augusta at the Railway Workshops, the Government let a contract for 40 extra houses in Port Augusta to provide additional accommodation for railway workmen, and the Government has made it clear that on its being able to obtain any economic demand for natural gas in Port Augusta, a spurline will be built and gas will be provided at not more than the metropolitan price.

The Government's course for the future is, however, being inhibited by the reactionary majority in the Legislative Council which has refused electoral reform, refused to pass the Government Insurance Office Bill providing for an insurance office covering all insurable risks, refused the Government's compliance with the request of the Commonwealth Liberal Government to provide for adequate control of restrictive trade practices, refused the Family Inheritance Bill recommended by the Judges and the Law Society, refused the Government's legislation to give adequate protection under the Industrial Code to workers and particularly building workers in South Australia. In the last year, the Government has issued invitations to all apparently qualified voters to go on the Legislative Council roll. The northern districts of the Legislative Council now have over 8,000 more voters on the roll than previously. It is urgent that the people of the North see to it that they elect Legislative Councillors who will support these measures which I have outlined and which were refused by the Legislative Councillors now retiring. Moreover, the Labor Party has made it clear from the Bill introduced by the Playford Government, but thwarted by the Labor Party in the last Parliament, that they if they get back into office, intend to gerrymander the State by giving heavily weighted votes to safe L.C.L. areas and by decreasing representation from

country urban centres. Indeed, under their plan laid before Parliament in 1964, Port Augusta would have lost its member altogether.

It is vital that the people assert their right to have Governments enact the policies for which they vote. The fight is on between the right of people to rule themselves or to be ruled by an unrepresentative minority who say they know the "permanent will" of the people regardless of how the people vote.
